

the Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Governmental Affairs, jointly, pursuant to the order of August 4, 1977, that if one Committee report, the other Committee have thirty days to report or be discharged.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BYRD, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. CONRAD, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. DODD, Mr. KOHL, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. FORD, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. CAMPBELL, and Mr. JEFFORDS):

S. 2358. A bill to provide for the establishment of a service-connection for illnesses associated with service in the Persian Gulf War, to extend and enhance certain health care authorities relating to such service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans Affairs.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. KERRY, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. JEFFORDS, and Mr. DOMENICI):

S. 2359. A bill to amend the National Environmental Education Act to extend the programs under the Act, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mr. FRIST):

S. 2360. A bill to authorize appropriations for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for Fiscal Years 1999, 2000, and 2001, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. INHOFE (for himself and Mr. GRAHAM):

S. 2361. A bill to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to authorize programs for predisaster mitigation, to streamline the administration of disaster relief, to control the Federal costs of disaster assistance, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BOND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BREAUX, Mr. BROWNBAC, Mr. BRYAN, Mr. BUMPERS, Mr. BURNS, Mr. BYRD, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. COVERDELL, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. D'AMATO, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. DODD, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FORD, Mr. FRIST, Mr. GLENN, Mr. GORTON, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. GRAMS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELMS, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KEMPTHORNE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERREY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KOHL, Mr. KYL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. MACK, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, Mr. ROBB, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. ROTH, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WELLSTONE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Con. Res. 110. A concurrent resolution honoring the memory of Detective John Michael Gibson and Private First Class Jacob Joseph Chestnut of the United States Capitol Police for their selfless acts of heroism at the United States Capitol on July 24, 1998; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. ABRAHAM, Mr. AKAKA, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. ASHCROFT, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BOND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. BREAUX, Mr. BROWNBAC, Mr. BRYAN, Mr. BUMPERS, Mr. BURNS, Mr. BYRD, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. CHAFEE, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. COATS, Mr. COCHRAN, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. CONRAD, Mr. COVERDELL, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. D'AMATO, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. DODD, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. FORD, Mr. FRIST, Mr. GLENN, Mr. GORTON, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRAMM, Mr. GRAMS, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. HAGEL, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HELMS, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. INOUE, Mr. JEFFORDS, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. KEMPTHORNE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KERREY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. KOHL, Mr. KYL, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. MACK, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. MCCONNELL, Ms. MIKULSKI, Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. REED, Mr. REID, Mr. ROBB, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, Mr. ROTH, Mr. SANTORUM, Mr. SARBANES, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. THOMAS, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. WARNER, Mr. WELLSTONE, and Mr. WYDEN):

S. Con. Res. 111. A concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for a memorial service for Detective John Michael Gibson and Private First Class Jacob Joseph Chestnut of the United States Capitol Police, and for other purposes; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. MOYNIHAN, and Mr. FORD):

S. Con. Res. 112. A concurrent resolution to authorize the printing of the eulogies of the Senate and the House of Representatives for Detective John Michael Gibson and Private First Class Jacob Joseph Chestnut; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. MOYNIHAN, and Mr. FORD):

S. Con. Res. 112. A concurrent resolution to authorize the printing of the eulogies of the Senate and the House of Representatives for Detective John Michael Gibson and Private First Class Jacob Joseph Chestnut; considered and agreed to.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. ROBERTS (for himself, Mr. ENZI, Mr. KERREY, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. LUGAR, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. JOHNSON):

S. 2356. A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to provide for uniform food safety warning notification requirements, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources.

NATIONAL UNIFORMITY FOR FOOD ACT OF 1998

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I am pleased to join Senator ROBERTS and several other Members in introducing this legislation designed to establish national rules regarding standards, labeling and notification requirements for foods.

The legislation recognizes the reality that we have a truly national system of food production, processing and distribution. Perhaps the most apparent reason for a national system of rules relating to regulation of foods involves the economic costs associated with complying with varying state requirements. The burden of satisfying a number of different, and perhaps conflicting, requirements throughout the country can be significant.

Another aspect of the matter, though, involves the benefits to consumers. Certainly, when it comes to labeling and notification, I believe that consumers are entitled to have plenty of information that will help them make sound purchasing decisions for their families. I believe there can come a point, however, when a multitude of varying labeling and notification requirements can confuse consumers and be counterproductive with respect to helping them make sound choices.

Accordingly, this bill would establish a framework for uniform national rules relating to food labeling, standards and notification requirements while recognizing the interest of the states in regulatory activities involving food. Under the bill, states would continue to have full authority in the area of food sanitation requirements. States could also petition for new national standards or exemption from established national standards and could take emergency action inconsistent with the national standards in the case of imminent hazards. States would continue to have full authority to establish and enforce standards relating to matters on which a national standard had not been set. In addition, the bill specifically identifies a number of types of labeling requirements as to which the states would continue to have full authority.

The bill being introduced today is a sound starting point for further discussion and study, and for hearings that I hope can be scheduled soon. I am sure that during this process issues and considerations will arise that will need to be addressed in the legislation. I look forward to working with the Senator from Kansas and other colleagues toward producing a final bill that will achieve broad support and be enacted.

By Mr. ROCKEFELLER (for himself, Mr. BYRD, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. DASCHLE, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. CONRAD, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. KERRY, Mr. DODD, Mr. KOHL, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. FORD, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. CAMPBELL, and Mr. JEFFORDS):

S. 2358. A bill to provide for the establishment of a service-connection for

illnesses associated with service in the Persian Gulf war, to extend and enhance certain health care authorities relating to such service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

PERSIAN GULF VETERANS ACT OF 1998

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, not too long ago, the Senate returned to work from celebrating the Fourth of July, Independence Day. By now, the flags that flew so gaily in front of our houses have long since been furled or folded, tucked away in dark closets until next year. The banners and bunting that adorned main streets throughout the country have been taken down, and the high school band's uniforms are again hanging in orderly rows to await September's football games. Our military veterans, cheered at Fourth of July parades as the legacy of those proud men who wrested our freedom from the hands of Redcoats, have again been put out of most people's minds until somber Veterans Day rolls around in November. But it is with the memory of Independence Day still fresh in my mind that I consider how well we as a nation treat the veterans who have protected our freedoms so well.

The Department of Veterans Affairs does a pretty good job of taking care of individual veterans, despite the fact that funding for veterans programs has been declining in real dollars for many years. But, like most bureaucracies, the VA does not always move nimbly and with great precision to identify big trends as quickly as one might like. In large part, that may be because the VA must depend on the even larger and more cumbersome Department of Defense to provide it with the background information on what happened to our veterans while they were on active duty that may require the ministrations of the VA after a conflict. In the case of the Persian Gulf War, the Department of Defense did not, by its own admission, do a very aggressive job early on in trying to get to the bottom of what happened in the Gulf. As a result, we have been engaged in a long and circular debate regarding the large numbers of sick Persian Gulf War veterans, and the trail that will lead us to the answers to what really happened in that theater of operations is growing colder by the day.

Mr. President, I have been working with the Committee on Veterans' Affairs on this issue, and I am pleased that Senator ROCKEFELLER, Senator SPECTER, and I have been able to draft a bill that will bring to a close a part of the debate that has been eroding the confidence of our soldiers in their government's support for them, and eroding the confidence of our veterans that their nation cares for them. I thank my colleague from West Virginia, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, for his courtesy in working with me, and I thank Senator SPECTER also for his cooperation. The en-

couragement and support offered by the Chronic Illness Research Foundation and the veterans service organizations, particularly the American Legion, the National Gulf War Resources Center, Vietnam Veterans of America, and the National Vietnam and Gulf War Veterans Coalition, have also been critical to this joint effort. That debate is the now 7-year-old argument over what really happened to our soldiers, sailors, and airmen during the Operation Desert Storm to make so many of them sick. As of March 31, 1998, there were 112,123 active and former military personnel on the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs' Persian Gulf Registries. That is a lot of sick people, and I understand that new registrants continue to sign on at a rate of 80 to 90 each week.

In the 7 years since the "hot" phase of that conflict ended, a fog of words has further obscured the fog of war that enveloped these military men and women in its fetid, inky grasp. Panel after panel has been convened, congressional committee after congressional committee has conducted hearings, report after report has been issued. Mountains of paper have been created. Yet, substantial, concrete action to end this debate has not been taken, though many recommendations have been issued.

The President's own Advisory Committee on Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses warned in their October 1997 final report that the government's credibility was at stake and urged that a "permanent, statutory" program of benefits and health care for the sick Persian Gulf veterans be established. This bill that we have introduced today begins that important work. It ends the long argument about what happened in the Gulf and who might have been exposed to what, and focuses on the "now what?" phase. This bill establishes a mechanism for the National Academy of Sciences or some other comparable body to periodically review the scientific and medical literature to identify what specific illnesses or diseases might arise from exposure to all of those hazardous materials that were present in the Gulf or that can otherwise be associated with service in that theater of war. The experts provide the Secretary of Veterans Affairs with that list, and the Secretary reviews and establishes regulations to establish those illnesses and diseases as service connected for the purposes of providing medical care and other benefits to Gulf War veterans. The Secretary will also receive recommendations from the National Academy regarding further medical research needed to answer questions about illness and service in the Gulf. The Secretary, in conjunction with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Health and Human Services, is requested to outline a program of medical research based on those recommendations and other information that may warrant further research.

In an effort to jump-start this review process, the bill contains a lengthy list

of materials to which numerous government and expert scientific panels have suggested the Gulf veterans may have been exposed. This list was drawn from legislation, H.R. 4036, introduced in the House of Representatives by Representative CHRISTOPHER SHAYS and Representative BERNARD SANDERS of the Subcommittee on Human Resources of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight after 2 years of hearings and review. Their tireless efforts have been invaluable. This bill asks the National Academy to begin its review with that list, and to report within 6 months on its findings. Our concern is to expedite this process with as much speed as is prudent, given the long wait that these veterans have already faced.

Remember the chiaroscuro images of that conflict—the bright sand inked over with grimy, oily debris, the road dust sprayed down with oil, chemical alarms blaring, pesticides and insecticides liberally sprayed to keep disease-carrying insects at bay, and of men and women pumped full of last minute vaccines and ordered to take nerve agent pretreatment pills whenever the chemical alarms sounded. Top it all off with the image of man-made thunderclouds forming over the vast ammunition pit at Khamisiyah when U.S. troops destroyed tons of captured Iraqi shells, some unknown quantity of which was loaded with chemical mustard and nerve agents. It was a dirty, dirty war, concentrated over a fairly compact area filled with almost 700,000 U.S. troops. We can be fairly confident on the basis of many previous studies that all of these listed hazards and potential hazards were present in that theater of war, even though we will never be able to say which hazards each individual soldier, sailor, and airman was exposed to and at what dosage. But wounds created by chemicals maim just as readily, if not as visibly, as bullets.

This situation, and this legislation addressing it, are similar to the way that the terrible legacy of Agent Orange from the Vietnam War was finally, agonizingly, resolved. In that case, finally, Congress simply declared that we know that these herbicides were present in country in enormous quantities, but we do not know, and likely never will know, precisely who may have been exposed to them and in what dosage. Therefore, we will simply acknowledge that if you were there during the time that Agent Orange and the other similar herbicides were being used, you may well have been exposed, and if you come down with a disease or illness which can be plausibly linked to that exposure, we will assume that you may have gotten it as a result of that exposure and act accordingly.

It took a long time to get to that point, but it was the right thing to do, and it helped to restore the crisis in confidence that had shaken our servicemen and our veterans. The situation in the Gulf is hauntingly similar, a refrain from the same song. Almost